



# Help After the Disaster is Declared

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Emergency Management Division  
Washington Military Department

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## **Background**

Once the president declares an emergency or a major disaster, the Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division (EMD), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) establish a Disaster Field Office from which to jointly administer disaster programs.

## **Human Services**

FEMA announces a toll free phone number for individuals, families, and small businesses to apply for disaster assistance. More information is available in the Disaster Assistance for Individuals and Families fact sheet.

## **Public Agency Assistance**

State and federal officials organize and conduct meetings for government agencies, special purpose districts, private non-profit organizations, and Indian Tribes that suffered damage. In the meetings, the agencies are provided with information about programs to pay for debris removal and repairing public facilities such as roads, bridges, and utilities. These briefings are conducted as soon as possible after the declaration in centralized locations within the affected area. The application begins with a Notice of Interest.

Following the briefings, joint local-state-federal teams are established. They prepare project worksheets for each damaged facility. The worksheets describe needed repairs and provide a cost estimate. Once projects are approved by designated state and federal disaster officials, eligible work can be funded and repairs begun. It is the responsibility of the agency that owns or operates the damaged public facility to make the repairs.

Funding is provided through EMD. The federal government pays 75 percent of the work; usually 12.5 percent is paid by the state, and the affected agency or community pays 12.5 percent.

**Reducing Future  
Disaster Damage  
Through Hazard  
Mitigation  
Planning and  
Grants**

A team of local, state and federal officials is convened to develop a plan to reduce future damages caused by the hazard, e.g., flooding or fire storm, that is incorporated into the comprehensive Washington State Hazard Mitigation Strategy. This document is used to support a grant program to fund eligible, hazard mitigation projects and hazard mitigation planning for government agencies, special districts, private non-profit organizations, and Indian Tribes affected by the disaster.

Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. Funding is limited and requires matching money. The federal government pays 75 percent; 12.5 percent is paid by the state and 12.5 percent is paid by the applicant agency. Initial application is made through a Letter of Intent to EMD following the disaster.

Typically, funded projects will substantially reduce future damage, be cost effective and practical, contribute to solving a long-term problem, and be environmentally sound.

**Contact**

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